

Readings for December 16 & 17 Bible Study



**Isaiah 11:1-10**

**There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.**

**And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,**

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
The Spirit of counsel and might,  
The Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear,

But **with righteousness he shall judge** the poor,

And he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,

And with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

**Righteousness** shall be the belt of his waist, and **faithfulness** the belt of his loins.

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat.

And the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together;

And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain;

For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

**In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples**—of him shall the nations inquire, and **his resting place shall be glorious.**

- What truths from verse 1 are shown in the picture above?
- What significance is there that Isaiah's prophesy comes nearly **700 years** prior to Jesus' birth?

- What does this mean to us when we think about the unfilled promises the Lord has made in light of 2,000 years having passed?
- What does “**righteousness**” mean in verse 4a and 5a?
- What does “**faithfulness**” mean in verse 5b?
- What significance is there in the contrast between the peace that will define the future in the relationships of prey and predators of today?
- How will Jesus/Immanuel be a “**signal for the peoples**”?
- What does it mean for us that the root of Jesse’s resting place “**shall be glorious**”?



**Romans 15:4-13**

**For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that** through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures **we might have hope.** May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

**Therefore I will praise you among the GENTILES, and sing to your name.**”

And again it is said, “**Rejoice, O GENTILES, with his people.**”

And again

**“Praise the Lord all you GENTILES, and let all the peoples extol him.”**

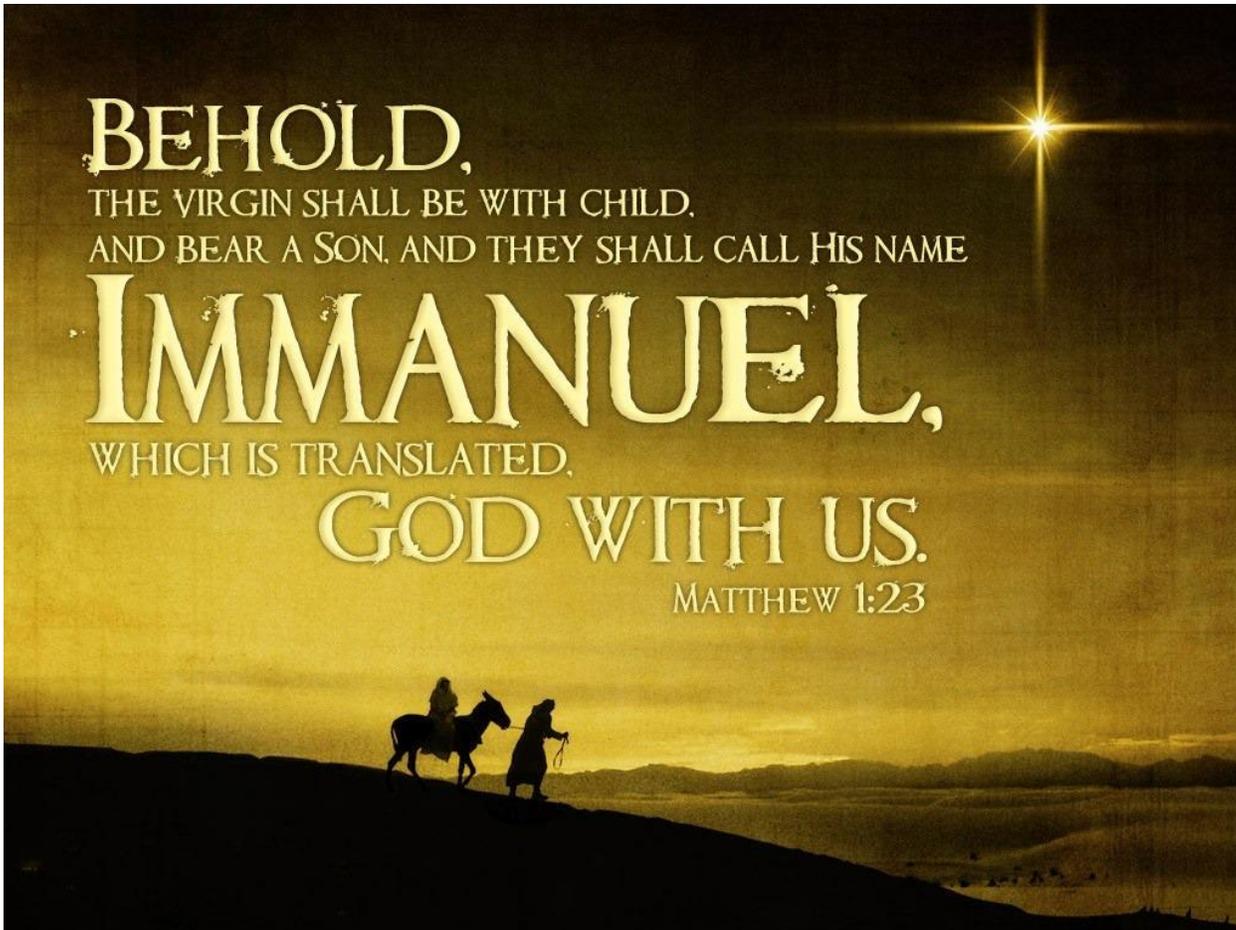
And again Isaiah says,

**“The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the GENTILES; In him will the GENTILES hope.”**

**May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.**

- What are the “**written in former days**”?
- Why would the Old Testament bring us “**hope**”?

- What is the significance of “**GENTILES**” being used six times in these verses?
- Who is Psalm 117 written to?
- What comfort does this bring to us today?
- According to verse 13, is our salvation **objective** or **subjective**? What difference does this make in our daily lives?



### **Matthew 1:18-25**

**Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way.** When his mother Mary had been **betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.** And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, **resolved to divorce her quietly.** But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “**Joseph son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.** She will bear a son, and **you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.**” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name **Immanuel**”

(which means, **God with us**). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, **but knew her not** until she had given birth to a son. **And he called his name Jesus.**

- What is/are the overarching reason(s) Matthew has in mind in these verses?
- What does the word “**Betrothed**” mean today?
- How is this different from 2,000 years ago?

- How is “**divorce**” different now than in Jesus’ day?
- How was the Holy Spirit involved in Jesus’ conception?
- What significance is there in the name “**Immanuel—God With Us**”?
- What significance is there in the name “**Jesus**”? [*The Lord is salvation*]
- What importance is there that “[Joseph] **knew** her not”?

Herod the Great’s Kingdom and the divisions that took place after his death in 4/1 BC.

